2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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National report on the implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by the Russian Federation

Introduction

1. This report has been prepared for the seventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and contains information on the implementation of its articles by the Russian Federation over the period that has elapsed since the sixth Review Conference was held in 2000.

2. The Russian Federation is convinced that the indefinitely extended NPT is a time-tested instrument and a sound pillar of the international security system. During the 35 years since its entry into force, the Treaty has proved its viability and has withstood many difficult tests. It continues to perform successfully its role as the most important instrument for preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, serve as a foundation for progress towards irreversible nuclear disarmament, and provide for international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

3. The events of the past five years have demonstrated the increasing role of the NPT in averting the threat of the global spread of nuclear weapons. The timeliness of taking effective non-proliferation measures today is also dictated by the danger of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) falling into the hands of terrorists. New challenges to the non-proliferation regime, including the emergence of "black" nuclear markets, can and should be addressed within the NPT framework. The Russian Federation is ready to engage in close international partnership to counter this threat.

4. Resolutions adopted on the initiative of the Russian Federation at the fifty-seventh and fifty-eighth sessions of the General Assembly call for the development under the aegis of the United Nations of a global strategy to counter current challenges and threats. They outline specific benchmarks guiding the international community to a new security model that would be adequate to the nature of the global challenges of the twenty-first century. It is important for the NPT to secure its place as one of the key elements of this model. Our country co-sponsored Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and the Group of Eight (G-8) Plan of Action in the

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field of non-proliferation, and participates in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). These steps are mutually reinforcing and aim to enhance the effectiveness of the regimes for the non-proliferation of WMD, in particular nuclear weapons.

5. On 13 April 2005, the General Assembly adopted the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. This is the first time a counter-terrorism convention includes a pre-emptive facet, addressing the situation before terrorist acts involving nuclear material and other radioactive substances are committed. The Russian Federation believes that adoption of the Convention by consensus would help unite States in their struggle against the challenges posed by terrorists to our civilization. We hope that it will be opened for signature during the 2005 summit meeting of the leaders of the United Nations Member States in New York on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the Organization.

6. The tasks of countering the proliferation of WMD and combating terrorism should be dealt with in strict compliance with the norms of international law and with due account for the legitimate development and security interests of all States. We are thus convinced that the NPT should be fully and effectively implemented in years to come. In this regard we believe that the 2005 Review Conference should focus above all on a comprehensive and objective review of every aspect of the implementation of the NPT, reaffirm its viability as the most important tool for averting the threat of nuclear proliferation and reiterate the commitment of all States parties to fulfil their obligations under this Treaty, as well as agree on joint steps towards further strengthening of the non-proliferation regime in order to achieve its universalization.

7. The role of the Russian Federation in ensuring implementation of, and compliance with, the provisions and articles of the Treaty is described below:

Articles I and II

8. The Russian Federation, as a nuclear-weapon State, has strictly complied with its obligations under article I of the Treaty not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly. The Russian Federation has never in any way assisted, encouraged, or induced any non-nuclear-weapon State to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or control over such weapons or explosive devices.

9. The Russian Federation believes that strict compliance with article II of the Treaty is one of the main guarantees against the emergence of new nuclear-weapon States.

Article III

10. Applications of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards under this article of the Treaty is an important prerequisite for cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

11. The Russian Federation supports the efforts of IAEA in this field and considers it essential to further strengthen the verification role of the Agency. The Russian Federation is ready to cooperate with all interested countries to establish a special

committee on safeguards under the IAEA Board of Governors with a clear mandate within the Agency's Statute to work out a comprehensive plan for strengthening safeguards and the verification regime. The implementation of the measures provided by the Additional Protocol should aim above all to enhance the efficiency of the safeguards in non-nuclear-weapon States, reduce implementation-related costs and trace possible non-declared activities.

12. In this context we attach great importance to the introduction of a system of integrated safeguards with a view to ensuring that control measures do not become an additional burden for States implementing the Additional Protocol.

13. The Additional Protocol being in place should serve as one of the factors to be taken into account when considering nuclear export possibilities. At present the Russian Federation is willing to regard it as one of conditions for transferring sensitive nuclear technology and equipment.

14. The Russian Federation advocates further efforts to universalize the Additional Protocol and urges the States that have not yet signed or ratified it to do so as soon as possible.

15. The Russian Federation has initiated the procedure for ratifying the Additional Protocol. It will be submitted for consideration to the chambers of the Federal Assembly in the course of 2005.

16. The Russian Federation has contributed and will further contribute to strengthening the IAEA safeguards system by financing its national programme of scientific and technical support for the IAEA safeguards. Russian institutes and entities have conducted scientific, technical and analytical studies to ensure export control over nuclear material in order to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

17. Within the framework of the programme, the Russian Federation regularly sponsors international training courses for IAEA inspectors on non-destructive methods of analysis and State systems of accounting for and control of nuclear materials. With a view to improving methods of verification of undeclared nuclear activities, we conduct studies of environmental samples, as well as of contamination levels of facilities and equipment, aimed at identifying uranium and plutonium microparticles. We have streamlined and processed information which is of relevance to the purposes of the IAEA safeguards.

18. Today there exists a real danger that, under the pretext of developing nuclear power, capabilities may be created that, if necessary, could easily be used for military purposes. The Russian Federation is ready to establish strict but objective criteria that would regulate transfers of the most sensitive nuclear technology, such as uranium enrichment and chemical reprocessing of nuclear fuel. The Russian Federation itself does not transfer such technologies to non-nuclear-weapon States which do no possess them.

19. The Russian Federation regards the strengthening of multilateral export control regimes as one of the most important instruments to combat illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and technology. Enhancing their efficiency and transparency, as well as involving countries possessing relevant technologies in their operation would, in our view, prevent unauthorized transfers of controlled nuclear items and technology.

20. The national export control system of the Russian Federation is based on control lists and export regulations for the listed items which were established in conformity with the requirements of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zangger Committee. We have supported their activities ever since they were created and we believe that they managed to agree on a procedure for the transfer of controlled products without infringing upon the legitimate rights of States to use nuclear power for peaceful purposes. The Russian Federation seeks further dialogue and constructive interaction with all countries, including those outside the NPT, in order to assist them in creating and improving national systems of nuclear export control.

21. The Russian Federation attaches great importance to coordinating international efforts to address the risks of nuclear and radiological terrorism. It supports consistent and universal implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation, aimed at countering "black" WMD markets and preventing the risk of such weapons, related materials, technology and their means of delivery falling into the hands of non-State actors, above all terrorist organizations. The Russian Federation takes an active part in the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) for its effective implementation.

22. The Russian Federation considers the 1979 Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material to be an effective instrument in ensuring the physical protection of nuclear material across the world. We support an early revision of the Convention aimed at making it more effective. We are ready to contribute fully to the successful outcome of the Diplomatic Conference to approve such amendments which is to be held in July 2005.

23. The Russian Federation participates in the IAEA programme to combat illicit trafficking in nuclear materials. Our country, with the support of the Agency, organizes international training courses for experts in physical protection. Since 2001, representatives of 17 countries have attended those courses.

24. The Russian Federation contributes to the maintenance of the IAEA database on illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and radioactive substances and regularly submits relevant information to be included in it.

25. The Russian Federation considers that ensuring the security and safety of radioactive sources (RS) is an important means of preventing the uncontrolled proliferation of hazardous materials used to produce, inter alia, the "dirty bomb". We support multilateral efforts in this area, in particular the resolution adopted by the IAEA General Conference in 2004. Along with other G-8 members, the Russian Federation has proposed and is carrying out a number of RS security initiatives. We support the IAEA activities aimed at ensuring secure handling of radioactive sources. We commend the adoption of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the formulation of the Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources. The Russian Federation is assisting IAEA in drafting the International Catalogue of Sealed Radioactive Sources and Devices, which also contributes to enhancing control over them.

26. The Russian Federation, as a major producer, consumer and exporter of radioactive sources, is actively working to establish an RS export/import control regime. We are taking steps to harmonize national norms and regulations with international principles.

27. On the initiative of the Russian Federation, the United States of America and IAEA, the International Conference on the Security of Radioactive Sources was held in Vienna in March 2003. Its participants positively assessed the implementation of the trilateral Russian Federation-United States-IAEA initiative on enhancing the security of radioactive sources through establishing adequate control and providing for search and withdrawal of "orphaned" sources, as well as processing them to a safe condition. We are in favour of expanding the initiative initially addressed to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries to cover other regions. Under this project the Russian Federation took part in the preparation and implementation of joint United States-IAEA missions of experts to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The missions resulted in the conclusion of a number of contracts for constructing storage facilities for highly dangerous radioactive sources and upgrading the physical protection of existing facilities, as well as for transporting radioactive sources to safe storage sites.

28. Cooperation between the Russian Federation and the United States of America with the participation of IAEA on repatriation from third countries of highly enriched uranium (HEU) fuel for research reactors of Russian and American design is especially important in the context of efforts to prevent the danger of highly enriched materials falling into the hands of terrorists. The Russian Federation has already withdrawn such fuel from Bulgaria, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Czech Republic, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro and Uzbekistan. We are currently working on or implementing similar projects on withdrawal of such fuel from six other countries. The Russian Federation supports the IAEA programme on decreasing the level of enrichment of nuclear fuel for research reactors to less than 20 per cent. Its implementation will considerably reduce the risk of HEU proliferation.

29. The Russian Federation has elaborated and put in place a sophisticated national legislative and regulatory framework for handling radioactive materials which makes it possible to reliably ensure their transportation security and meets all IAEA requirements. We are in favour of strengthening the regime governing the transportation of such materials which has been adopted by the international community. However, we consider that it should not result in the erection of artificial barriers which are often incompatible with universally recognized norms of international law.

Article IV

30. The Russian Federation believes that in the immediate future there is no alternative to the further development and improvement of the nuclear energy sector.

31. Energy consumption across the world is growing rapidly. In the second half of the twenty-first century the stocks of oil and natural gas will be virtually exhausted. The countries that have joined the Kyoto Protocol (the Russian Federation has ratified the Protocol) have undertaken to reduce emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. This problem could well be solved through developing nuclear energy.

32. The Russian Federation consistently advocates broader access of the NPT member States to the benefits of peaceful nuclear energy and promotes international

cooperation in this sphere. We believe that it is crucially important to make further efforts to enhance the role and authority of IAEA, a competent and responsible organization which provides for such cooperation on a global scale. This will make it possible to strike the necessary balance between harnessing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

33. The further development of nuclear energy and its large-scale use for the purposes of economic development require a systemic approach to tackling new fundamental and complex tasks. It was with these issues in mind that, at the United Nations Millennium Summit, the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, proposed an initiative on the sustainable development of humankind and radical ways to address the issues of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the environmental protection of planet Earth. In line with this initiative IAEA is implementing the International Project on Innovative Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO). Its primary objective is to create nuclear energy systems that are economically competitive, environmentally safe and capable of virtually eliminating the risk of proliferation and ensuring the sustainable development of civilization.

34. The latest stage of the project, during which the methodology of a case-by-case comparison of innovative nuclear energy systems was tested, has now been completed. This methodology is already being applied to evaluate existing national nuclear energy technologies, including in terms of how well they meet the non-proliferation requirements.

35. The number of countries participating in the project has reached 22, including the European Commission, and the fact that some countries participating in this project are at the same time involved in a United States-led programme — Generation IV International Forum — calls for a closer interaction of these two projects.

36. The International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project is yet another example of the Russian Federation's successful participation in multilateral cooperation in the field of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. ITER is a unique engineering project. We hope that the complex negotiations on the choice of a site will be soon completed and the project will be put on a practical track.

37. The analysis of technological aspects of promising innovations can be used for studying problems and stages of establishing an international structure of the nuclear fuel cycle (NFC), including organization of an international network of nuclear energy service providers.

38. Tackling the NFC problem on an international basis would be advantageous from the point of view of the economy, the environment and security, as well as the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We commend the results of the work done by the IAEA Expert Group to consider possible multilateral approaches to sensitive technologies of the nuclear fuel cycle established by the IAEA Director General Mr. El Baradei.

39. On 13-15 July 2005, the Russian Federation will sponsor an international conference on multilateral approaches to the NFC. We hope that this conference will give new impetus and content to possible areas of international cooperation in the field of nuclear technology.

40. The Russian Federation believes it essential to create an environment that would prevent the spread of sensitive NFC technologies and at the same time ensure the development of large-scale nuclear energy industry.

41. In March 2005, the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation passed a law ratifying the 1963 Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage. The Russian Federation thus acknowledged the primacy of international law in regulating civil liability for nuclear damage. This step will promote our cooperation with other countries with regard to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

42. The Russian Federation attaches great importance to ensuring the safety of its nuclear facilities, viewing it as a condition sine qua non for developing the nuclear energy industry. It actively participates in the Convention on Nuclear Safety. As mandated by the Convention, the Russian Federation prepared its national report, reflecting its compliance with the obligations to ensure nuclear safety in the country, and submitted it at the third meeting to review national reports held in April 2005.

43. We attach paramount importance to the programme of technical assistance and cooperation in IAEA activity. Over the course of many years the Russian Federation has actively cooperated with IAEA in implementing projects seeking effective use of applied nuclear technology in areas that are important for developing the economies of the Agency's member States.

44. The Russian Federation has expanded its participation in safety- and security-related projects, including projects dealing with the safety of nuclear facilities, radiation security and the safety of transportation and radioactive waste management.

45. Over the past five years the Russian Federation has met its obligations to supply Georgia with containers for storing and transferring radioactive sources, to establish a radiation control system to monitor the environment of the Armenia nuclear power plant, to remove radioisotope thermoelectric generators from Belarus and dispose of them, to upgrade and provide new equipment for the CIS oncology centres, to supply low enrichment nuclear fuel to Poland's research reactor, and has fulfilled obligations arising from other projects.

46. The Russian Federation has also been actively contributing to training skilled national personnel for other countries and conducting scientific research, which are important elements of technical assistance activities.

47. The Russian Federation is assisting the NPT developing countries in building accelerators and neutron generators; it also supplies neutron radiography units, gamma-ray treatment equipment, liquid nitrogen production units, ionizing irradiation sources, and other equipment and materials. We are willing to look into the possibility of cooperating in building low- and medium-power reactors, including mobile nuclear power stations with long-life no-reload operation. Such stations could be run and fully controlled by a supplying State. The Russian Federation is ready to proceed with the construction of a 70 mW offshore nuclear power station capable of both producing energy and desalinating water.

48. The Russian Federation is taking part in the IAEA programme to develop a network of regional international training and demonstration centres for reprocessing and storage of radioactive wastes produced as a result of applying

nuclear methods in health care, scientific research and industry. Since 1999, within the framework of this programme, the Russian Federation has hosted annual regional demonstration IAEA courses attended by CIS and East European countries.

49. The Russian Federation attaches utmost importance to developing cooperation with CIS member States in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It takes part in the activities of the Russian-Kazakh-Kyrgyz enterprise developing the "Zarechnoe" uranium deposit and of the Russian-Ukrainian-Kazakh enterprise manufacturing "UkrTVS" fuel assemblies, and it also contributes to enhancing security at the Armenia nuclear power station.

Article V

50. In connection with the elaboration and opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Russian Federation has made the Treaty's entry into force one of the priority spheres of its work.

51. Since 1991, the year the Russian Federation proclaimed its sovereignty, it has not carried out a single nuclear explosion, and it intends to pursue this course in the future. We hope that other nuclear Powers will take a similar approach.

52. The Russian Federation ratified the CTBT in April 2000. We remain committed to this Treaty, which makes an essential contribution to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We are convinced that a comprehensive and no-threshold ban on any nuclear explosions is an effective means of restraining the qualitative improvement of nuclear warheads.

53. Progress towards a nuclear-free world depends to a great extent on ensuring the universality of the CTBT and on the accession to it of all the States possessing nuclear-weapon ability, that is, on the early entry into force of the Treaty, and strict compliance with all its provisions. We are sparing no efforts to attain this objective. In addition to bilateral work, we consistently participate in the relevant multilateral activities. Our country co-sponsored two joint statements by the "Friends of the CTBT" Ministers for Foreign Affairs, adopted during the General Assembly session, as well as the resolutions supporting the Treaty approved in recent years by the First Committee of the General Assembly. The Russian Federation took an active part in the 2001 and 2003 Conferences on facilitating the entry into force of the CTBT, and looks forward to the next Conference to be held in New York in September 2005.

54. The Russian Federation fully supports the gradual and balanced creation of a verification mechanism within the framework of the CTBT.

55. On 22 March 2005, the Government of the Russian Federation and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) signed an Agreement on measures regarding International Monitoring System (IMS) facilities, as envisaged by the Treaty.

56. In accordance with the provisions of the CTBT, the Russian segment of the IMS comprises 6 basic and 13 auxiliary seismic stations, as well as 4 infrasound stations, 8 radionuclide stations, and 1 radionuclide laboratory (a total of 32 IMS facilities). The conclusion of the Agreement provides a reliable legal framework for expanding cooperation between the Russian Federation and the CTBTO Preparatory Commission, and also enables us to speed up work to create a Russian IMS

segment — a key element of CTBT verification — and ensure its operation before the Treaty enters into force.

Article VI

57. The Russian Federation is committed to strictly fulfilling its obligations under article VI of the Treaty. At the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva we support the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee under agenda item 1 "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament".

58. We reaffirm the Russian Federation's commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons. An integral part of the Russian approach to the achievement of their complete elimination is a step-by-step process of nuclear arms reduction, with the condition that all the nuclear-weapon States take part in it and that the principle of undiminished security for all is observed.

59. The Russian Federation fulfils its obligations for the step-by-step reduction of its nuclear arsenals primarily within the framework of bilateral arrangements with the United States of America, as well as unilaterally. Recently this process has been gathering additional momentum. The Cold War era confrontation is now a memory of the past, and Russian-American relations are increasingly based on partnership. The two countries do not regard each other as potential adversaries. The threat of a global nuclear conflict has been eliminated, and the nuclear missile arms race has ceased. Gradual reductions of strategic offensive weapons are under way.

60. The Treaty on the elimination of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles (the INF Treaty), of unlimited duration, remains an essential component of nuclear disarmament. Under this Treaty two classes of land-based missiles with a range of 500 to 1,000 and 1,000 to 5,500 km — a total of 1,846 intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles and 825 of their launchers — were completely destroyed, while further production and testing of such missiles was banned.

61. We continue to implement the provisions of the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START).

62. Over the five-year period that has elapsed between the previous and current NPT Review Conferences, the Russian Federation reduced its strategic nuclear forces by 357 delivery vehicles and 1,740 nuclear warheads.

63. The Russian Federation has carried out reductions of its strategic nuclear arms well ahead of the schedule provided for by START. In accordance with the Treaty, as of 5 December 2001, the strategic offensive arms level should not exceed 1,600 carriers and 6,000 nuclear warheads. By that target date the actual levels were 1,136 and 5,518 pieces respectively.

64. Even though the Russian Federation has already met all of its treaty obligations in respect of reductions, it is continuing the course towards further elimination of strategic offensive arms. As is well known, the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions (Moscow Treaty) provides for the obligation of the Russian Federation and the United States of America to reduce and limit their strategic nuclear warheads to an aggregate number not exceeding 1,700-2,200 by 31 December 2012.

65. The Moscow Treaty, as well as the signature of Russian-American Declaration on the new strategic relationship, of 24 May 2002, constitute a major step towards nuclear disarmament that will have a significant impact on the twenty-first century international security system as a whole. In particular, the Russian Federation and the United States confirmed in the above-mentioned Declaration "their intention to carry out strategic offensive reductions to the lowest possible levels consistent with their national security requirements and alliance obligations, and reflecting the new nature of their strategic relations". Abiding by this intention, the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir V. Putin, has time and again reiterated our country's commitment to reduce, on a mutual basis its nuclear arsenals to a level much lower than that envisaged by the Moscow Treaty — namely to 1,500 weapons and less.

66. The Moscow Treaty basically ensures the continuity of the arms control and nuclear disarmament process and significantly contributes to the Russian Federation's implementation of article VI of the NPT.

67. The consistent efforts undertaken by the Russian Federation to reduce its nuclear weapons have by now led to elimination of 1,328 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and submarine launched ballistic missile (SLBM) launchers, 2,670 missiles, 45 strategic nuclear submarines and 66 heavy bombers. As of 1 January 2005, the Russian Federation possessed 981 deployed strategic offensive delivery vehicles and 4,732 warheads accountable under the START. Their number will be further progressively reduced. All these reductions represent a real contribution of the Russian Federation to the fulfilment of its obligations under the NPT.

68. The reduction of its non-strategic (tactical) nuclear weapons (TNW) represents a real contribution of the Russian Federation to the fulfilment of its obligations under article VI of the NPT. The Russian TNWs are now deployed only within the national territory and are concentrated at central storage facilities of the Ministry of Defence. All Russian nuclear weapons are under reliable control, and all necessary measures have been taken to prevent their unauthorized use.

69. At the same time it is important to note that the Russian Federation's non-strategic nuclear arsenal has been reduced by four times as compared to what the Soviet Union possessed in 1991. We will further reduce the level of these weapons. This process will obviously be pursued with due account for the military and strategic situation and our national security interests.

70. All nuclear weapons of the Russian Federation, including non-strategic weapons, are placed under reliable control. Their security is ensured by appropriate organizational, administrative and technical measures. Since 1991, the total number of nuclear weapons stockpiles has been reduced more than fivefold, and the number of nuclear weapons storage facilities has been cut more than fourfold. All non-strategic nuclear weapons have been moved to the central storage facilities of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation. These measures made it possible to allocate the financial resources released to ensuring the reliable protection of nuclear munitions storage facilities, including use of state-of-the-art technical security means.

71. The Russian Federation has developed and implemented a range of measures to counter terrorist acts, and all nuclear and radiation hazardous facilities are regularly inspected on a complex basis in order to verify the degree of their security and preparedness to resist terrorist acts.

72. An important measure to ensure the irreversibility of the process of nuclear arms reduction is the disposal of weapon-grade fissile materials which are no longer required for defence purposes. In this connection, the Russian Federation reaffirms its commitment to dispose of 34 tonnes of weapon-grade plutonium in accordance with the bilateral agreement with the United States of America of 1 September 2000. The Russian Federation is taking steps to prepare for the implementation of the programme of weapon-grade plutonium disposal. Sufficient multilateral funding of the Russian programme remains an important prerequisite for starting the disposal. The Russian Federation is carrying out an irreversible and large-scale conversion of highly enriched uranium, left after the nuclear arms reduction, into reactor fuel — low enriched uranium, that is in non-weapon form. Since 1995 we have converted 230 tonnes of highly enriched uranium into fuel for nuclear power stations.

73. The nuclear arms reduction process and prospects for further reductions are closely connected with the implementation of the whole range of other key arms control and disarmament agreements. Implementation of the plans to deploy a Global Missile Defence system does not contribute to maintaining strategic balance in the world and adversely affects nuclear arms control and disarmament. The weaponization of outer space would also produce a negative effect, and would entail unpredictable consequences for the disarmament and arms control process and for international security in general. This would be likely to result in a new spiral in the arms race both in outer space and on earth in the nuclear missile and other spheres, which, in turn, could accelerate the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

74. For its part the Russian Federation has repeatedly stated that it would not be the first to deploy weapons of any kind in outer space. Together with China and a number of other countries we submitted to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva a paper on possible elements for a future international legal agreement on the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space.

Article VII

75. The Russian Federation welcomes the process of establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world. In our view, this is a significant contribution to the development and consolidation of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. By creating nuclear-free zones, States are promoting in a practical way the strengthening of regional and international security and the enhancement of mutual trust and understanding. In the 37 years since the signature of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which established the first zone of the kind, the number of States covered by a nuclear-weapon-free zone regime increased several times and now exceeds 100.

76. The fact that our country has no nuclear weapons outside its national territory makes a specific contribution to the enhancement of the nuclear-weapon-free zone regime. We call upon other nuclear Powers which have not yet done so to follow suit.

77. We welcome the efforts of States to create new nuclear-weapon-free zones and are ready to support them. We are pleased that the work on the draft treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia is being finalized. We support the draft treaty negotiated by Central Asian countries in Tashkent in February 2005.

78. The Russian Federation is committed to the provisions of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review Conference and reaffirmed by the 2000 Conference. The developments in the Middle East are quite encouraging. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's voluntary renunciation of its WMD programmes, lack of convincing evidence of nuclear intentions on the part of Iraq, progress in clarifying concerns about the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear plans — all of this, in our view, creates favourable prospects for the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free from nuclear weapons and other WMD. As a member of the "quartet" of international mediators involved in the Middle East settlement process, the Russian Federation vigorously supports and encourages such a trend.

79. Every year our country votes in favour of the relevant General Assembly resolution. We believe that the establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East meets the long-term national interests of all the States of this region and will constitute a major step towards global peace and security.

80. Implementation of the IAEA full-scope safeguards in all States of the region and their accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention and Biological Weapons Convention remain the key condition for creating such zone. We support the efforts of the IAEA Director General to continue consultations with countries of the region with a view to ensuring early application of full-scope safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East on the basis of corresponding arrangements. We view this as a necessary step towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

81. The Russian Federation is ready to settle the remaining issues relating to the Treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South-East Asia through dialogue between the nuclear Powers and the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). We believe that the issue of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia which would promote stability on the entire subcontinent, also continues to be highly relevant.

82. The Russian Federation consistently supports the desire of non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT to obtain legally binding guarantees which would exclude the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against them. Achievement of this objective would strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime while enhancing confidence and predictability in relations among States.

83. We confirm our commitments arising from Security Council resolution 984 (1995). The Russian Federation has provided legally binding security assurances to all States which have acceded to nuclear-weapon-free zone agreements. We intend to follow the same course as new nuclear-weapon-free zones are established.

84. We do not object to the establishment at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva of an Ad Hoc Committee with a mandate to negotiate under the agenda item entitled "Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons", provided that the position stated in the military doctrine of the Russian Federation in relation to cases when such weapons may be used is taken into account.

Articles VIII, IX, X

85. The Russian Federation is pleased to note that 188 States are now parties to the NPT, which makes it one of the most widely represented international agreements.

To achieve universality of the NPT, the Russian Federation is actively working both in bilateral and multilateral formats to have India, Pakistan and Israel join the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States. While strictly observing the provisions of article IX, the Russian Federation has not changed its position as regards the presence of nuclear weapons in India and Pakistan. We continue, in accordance with the Treaty, to consider them non-nuclear-weapon States and expect them to comply with Security Council resolution 1172 (1998).

86. As regards the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its withdrawal from the Treaty, the Russian Federation is taking a very active part in the process of settling the nuclear issue of the Korean peninsula.

87. Recognizing its responsibility as a party to the Treaty as well as its depositary, the Russian Federation underlines the exceptional sensitivity of the issue of the withdrawal of States from the NPT. We consider it necessary to minimize the possibility of situations where States refuse to fulfil their obligations under the Treaty. We believe that enhancing the responsibility of States for making a decision to withdraw from the Treaty in accordance with article X could be one of the ways to strengthen the NPT. This objective could be achieved through the adoption of a number of political measures and procedures which would be applied in such cases. However, such actions should not lead to a revision of the provisions of the NPT.